

Letterboxing 101 Basic

A GOOD BASIC RULE OF THUMB

Treat everyone's letterbox as though it were your own!

SEARCHING FOR A LETTERBOX

While looking for a letterbox, remember to leave the area just as, or better than you found it. If you look under a rock, replace the rock where you found it. Don't pull out plants or rip up the ground looking for a letterbox. Avoid trampling vegetation while searching for the letterbox. Don't tear apart that stone wall that has withstood hundreds of years of time to find the box. Be discreet while searching if other people are around. You may need to postpone retrieving a box if you can't do it without being seen. Remember - not everyone is "letterbox-friendly" and you should not jeopardize someone else's letterbox.

FINDING A LETTERBOX

Carry it away from the hiding place when you stamp-in so as not to reveal the hiding place to passers-by, or to draw attention to what you are doing. Make sure you are discreet when unpacking the contents of the box and stamping-in.

RECLOSING A LETTERBOX

After stamping in, make sure the plastic bags are securely closed to keep moisture out. If there are 2 bags in the box, the logbook is what should be double-bagged since it has the most potential for becoming damaged. Rewrap the stamp in a paper towel. Make sure too that the lid of the container is snapped on tightly.

REHIDING A LETTERBOX

After finding a letterbox, rehide it as well as or better than you originally found it. Again, discretion at this time is very important. It is a good idea to cover the box with a handful of dead leaves, anchor the box with a flat rock so that an inquisitive critter can't run off with it, and then put a few more leaves or twigs on top so it looks natural to passers-by. Look at it from different angles before you leave to make sure no plastic is showing. Never leave a letterbox out in plain sight!

Letterboxing Etiquette and Definitions

LETTERBOXING WITH CHILDREN

Children are often enthusiastic to "do it themselves", which is great, but adults should ALWAYS oversee that they are closing up the box properly and rehiding it well.

PROBLEM WITH A BOX?

If you find a problem with the letterbox - maybe the clue needs updating or the letterbox needs maintenance or the logbook is full - attempt to inform the owner of the letterbox of the problem. You may be able to dry out the box if necessary with a paper towel or replace a baggie or even put in a new notepad or index cards to suffice as a logbook until the owner can replace it. Carry some basic supplies for these reasons.

TROUBLE FINDING A BOX?

Do not ask the authorities about a letterbox if you cannot find it. While the placer should get permission to plant a letterbox beforehand, most letterboxers work under the theory that planting letterboxes is okay until they are told otherwise. In such a case, not only will the authorities be unable to help you, they may instead confiscate the letterbox!

UNABLE TO FIND A BOX?

Rather than contacting the placer and telling them that "your box is missing" when you're "sure" you were looking in the correct place, it is much better to tell them that you were unable to find their box. They are more likely to get back to you and maybe even offer a hint!

RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Care must be taken in both planting and finding letterboxes. While planting a letterbox, avoid environmentally sensitive areas. Do not hide a letterbox far off the trail where others will trample vegetation, flowers, or otherwise cause damage. Use natural hiding places for your letterbox instead of digging holes or moving large rocks. The same applies when searching - if the box is off-trail, try not to create a "social trail" by following where previous boxers walked, it's damaging plus it's a dead giveaway to the location!

INK PADS IN LETTERBOXES

Some letterboxers supply an ink pad or markers in their letterbox. Since not all do, it is wise to take your own. Same with a pen.